

Statement



from the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee
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EOC statement regarding science content standards

Columbia – At its meeting on December 12, South Carolina Education Oversight Committee (EOC) members voted to recommend adoption of the South Carolina Science Academic Standards, with the exception of four indicators included within a biology content standard. These four indicators were deferred for decision.

The four indicators deferred for decision are included within Standard B-5, which demonstrate students' ability to "demonstrate an understanding of biological evolution and the diversity of life," and include:

- B-5.2 Explain how genetic processes result in the continuity of life-forms over time.
- B-5.4 Explain how genetic variability and environmental factors lead to biological evolution.
- B-5.5 Exemplify scientific evidence in the fields of anatomy, embryology, biochemistry, and paleontology that underlies the theory of biological evolution.
- B-5.7 Use a phylogenetic tree to identify the evolutionary relationships among different groups of organisms.

The committee directed EOC staff to organize a balanced panel of scientists and science educators to advise the Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee, a standing subcommittee of the EOC. Staff is consulting with individuals within the state and national science community and plans to have panelists identified as soon as possible. Although a date has not yet been determined, the panel discussion will be open.

A recommendation will emerge from the subcommittee level, and will be presented to the EOC at its February 13, 2006 meeting.

The EOC has authority (Section 59-18-360) to *approve* or *disapprove* recommended revisions arising from the cyclical review process. The EOC does *not* have the authority, nor has the committee suggested in Monday's decision, to rewrite or revise any content standard or indicator.

Established by the EAA, the EOC is an independent, non-partisan, 18-member legislative committee made up of educators, business persons, and elected officials who serve by virtue of their elected position or by appointment of the legislature or governor. It bears responsibilities for the development and improvement of SC's educational accountability system and for making recommendations to ensure the continuous improvement of schools.